

## **Opportunity Finance Network and Goldman Sachs Select Participants for 10,000 Small Businesses CDFI Growth Collaborative**

*Launch of New, Three-Year Education Effort to Expand Small Business Lending Capacity of CDFIs*

Philadelphia, PA, May 11, 2011—Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), the nation’s leading network of community development financial institutions (CDFIs), and The Goldman Sachs Group Inc.’s *10,000 Small Businesses Initiative* announced the 21 participants of the *10,000 Small Businesses CDFI Growth Collaborative* today. This distinguished group was selected from a pool of more than 50 applicants, and represents CDFI loan funds which vary in asset size and serve geographic markets across urban, rural, and Native communities in the U.S.

“CDFIs are an important vehicle through which the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* initiative continues to spur and support lending to small businesses in underserved communities across the U.S.,” said Alicia Glen, Managing Director and head of the Urban Investment Group at Goldman Sachs. “Through a learning network of in-person peer exchanges and online education workshops, the CDFI Growth Collaborative will help CDFIs develop both the capacity and knowledge to grow their small business lending portfolio and stimulate the growth of more small businesses in their communities.”

The CDFI Growth Collaborative is a three-year program that will provide participating CDFIs with a unique, “tuition paid” learning program to help CDFI loan funds address the needs of small businesses in underserved communities across the country. Participants will strengthen their capacity to lend to small businesses through practical peer learning opportunities. The CDFI industry will benefit from new technical assistance and resources published as a result of the program.

“OFN congratulates the new cohort of 21 CDFI loan funds that have been selected to participate in the *10,000 Small Businesses CDFI Growth Collaborative*. While the current outlook for small business financing remains challenging, we know that CDFI small business lending is vital to economic growth in distressed markets. This innovative, new program will certainly contribute to the body of small business financing knowledge for the industry, and we expect participants to incorporate new learning that will benefit the low-wealth and low-income communities they serve,” said Mark Pinsky, President and CEO of OFN.

The CDFI Growth Collaborative participants include:

- ACCION Texas-Louisiana, serving Louisiana and Texas
- Appalachian Community Enterprises d/b/a Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (ACE), serving Georgia
- Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), serving Maine
- Colorado Enterprise Fund, serving Colorado
- Community First Fund, serving Pennsylvania
- Economic and Community Development Institute, serving Ohio
- Hope Enterprise Corporation/Hope Credit Union, serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee
- Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, serving Kentucky
- Montana Community Development Corporation, serving Montana

- Natural Capital Investment Fund, Inc., serving North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia
- NDC Grow America Fund, a national CDFI
- New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, serving New Hampshire
- NewCorp, Inc., serving Louisiana
- Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, serving Minnesota and Wisconsin
- Northern Economic Initiatives Corporation, serving Michigan and Wisconsin
- PeopleFund, serving Texas
- Seedco Financial Services, serving Alabama, Louisiana, and New York
- Southeast Community Capital Corporation dba Pathway Lending, serving Tennessee
- Seattle Economic Development Fund, serving Washington State
- VEDC, serving California
- Virginia Community Capital, serving Virginia

Inna Kinney, participant of the CDFI Growth Collaborative and Founder and CEO at the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI) said, "Since 2008, ECDI has seen a spike in demand for larger loans. In response we have introduced new small business loan products and grown our loan portfolio. Working with the CDFI Growth Collaborative will allow us to learn from the experiences of other similar organizations and industry professionals, and will lead to more streamlined growth for ECDI. Ultimately, we hope to achieve greater community impact by funding and nurturing more profitable businesses, leading to greater job creation and higher salaries for the employees of the businesses we serve."

"Given the growth that HOPE anticipates in the coming years, we welcome the opportunity to access best-practice tools, policies, and procedures developed by partner CDFIs and OFN," said Bill Bynum, Chief Executive Officer at Hope/ECD. "The CDFI Growth Collaborative will help HOPE to identify potentially missed opportunities for loan products, lending efficiencies, and funding sources that will allow our CDFI to increase its production volume in a sustainable manner."

CDFI loan funds participating in this innovative new program will enjoy learning opportunities including:

- Information exchanges, meetings, online learning, and networking opportunities
- Opportunity to apply for one-on-one or small-group consulting services
- Focused training on topics of importance to the Collaborative
- Discussions/development of tools, policies, and best practices
- Opportunity to present on behalf of the Collaborative at the OFN Conference

CDFIs not participating in the Collaborative can also benefit from this program by: downloading new reports being published by OFN, such as the free, small business-focused technical assistance memo; attending small business sessions sponsored by Goldman Sachs at the annual OFN Conference; and by participating in small business-focused conference calls.

To schedule an interview with Mark Pinsky, President and CEO of OFN, Alicia Glen of Goldman Sachs, or any of the participating CDFIs, please contact Stefanie Arck, VP, Strategic Communications at Opportunity Finance Network at 215.320.4306.

**Opportunity Finance Network (OFN)**, the leading network of private financial institutions, creates growth that is good for communities, investors, individuals, and the economy. Members of OFN are community development financial institutions (CDFIs) who deliver responsible lending to help low-wealth and low-income communities join the economic mainstream. Opportunity Finance Network originated more than \$23.2 billion in financing in non-conforming urban, rural, and Native communities through 2009, which generated or maintained 298,511 jobs; 60,261 businesses and microenterprises; 635,528 housing units; and 6,465 community facility projects. More information is available at: [www.opportunityfinance.net](http://www.opportunityfinance.net)

**About the Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group**

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. is a leading global investment banking, securities and investment management firm that provides a wide range of financial services to a substantial and diversified client base that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and high-net-worth individuals. Founded in 1869, the firm is headquartered in New York and maintains offices in all major financial centers around the world.

*10,000 Small Businesses* is a \$500 million initiative that will unlock the growth and job-creation potential of 10,000 small businesses across the United States through greater access to business education, financial capital and business support services. It is based on the broadly held view of leading experts that a combination of education, capital, and support services best addresses the barriers to growth for small businesses. It is now operating in New York, Houston, New Orleans, Long Beach and Los Angeles and will continue to expand to communities across the country.